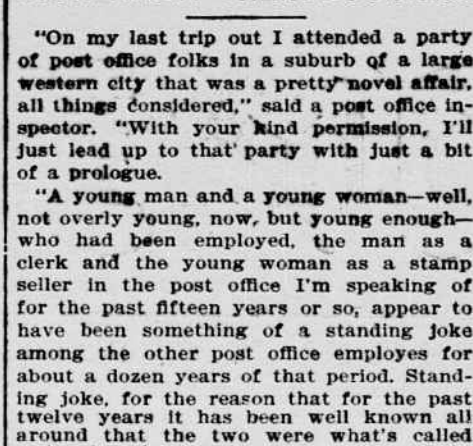


## THEY KNEW THEIR BUSINESS



best knowledge and belief of all hands, they never appeared to have got to the point of fixing a day and date for the ceremony. The man has been devoted, it seems, to the seller of stamper rings, during all that time, placing flowers on her desk in the morning, taking her to the cars under his umbrella on rainy evenings, and all that sort of thing. Then, too, the post office folks, especially the young women employees—the young women seem to be the most glib and settled next as it were to these little matters—have been noticing the two at the theaters, at picnics, and at car rides to their places of entertainment during all these years. They never saw the man with any other young woman, nor the young woman with any other escort. It was they rolled along, and they never seemed to have made it up between them about the little stand-up before a minister. Neither of these two thought-to-be indeterminate people was immune, of course, from the aging touch of time, and they went right along getting a bit older in appearance, like all the rest of their fellow-employees.

"They were both guysed a good deal, of course, but their apparently resultless mutual devotion, and their each took the guying good-naturedly.

[illegible]

"Let a girl of about eleven, then a boy of ten, another girl of eight or so, and then a boy of seven—about four."

"The two indeterminates were smiling all over, and the way they enjoyed the puzzled expressions on the features of their guests was almost comical."

"I think several of us 'dropped at once, but there were others who didn't."

"What do you think," exclaimed one of the young women who had been foremost in giving her indeterminate sister-employee, "Whose are they?"

"Those of the 'indeterminate' young woman, looking rather affectionately and smilingly at the man who had been a guest here long ago for his apparent lack of determination."

"Well, I fear that some of the women in the party froze just a trifle then, but the men were not so much affected as they went into the parlor, and there, garlanded about with a lot of flowers, was the marriage ceremony performed by the minister, so that the two had been married in the spring of 1887."

"You ought to have heard the fun," said one.

"Why," the other declared, "exclaimed the women, going up and hugging the smiling woman who had quite 'unbeknownst' to them become the bride."

"Well, dear your hide for a sly one!" said the men to the husband and father, "and if you don't look until he must have been sore." And so the wedding merrily lunched on the white bunch of us

"Well, it seems that they had both been a bit afraid of losing their positions in the post office, when they had first decided to leave their jobs. But when the divorce became a fact, the wife decided to sue for a divorce laked out. There's nothing but an unwritten law against a man and wife being married in the same office. It was a bit tight, but they had decided, anyway, to keep their business to themselves. The wife was a very good worker, and after a couple of years, but when she found that this wouldn't be absolutely necessary, she decided to leave the employ of Uncle Sam, so that on the next day she was paid, and not only owned their own pretty home, but, as they informed us with quite natural pride, a row of well-rendered houses in the city.

"The wife now wanted to transfer the laugh onto you, for she said, 'I told you so, tomorrow,' said the wife and mother, unluckily, when the supper was about finished, and she had had to kiss all the women all over again.

"She did resign her position the next day, and she had to face a divorce, after mauling her husband around ever since for his protracted foxiness."

**She Changed Her Mind**  
From Hit-Bits.

A young couple in a Lancashire village had been courting for several years. The young man one day said to the woman: "Well, I cannot marry thee."

"How do you know that?" she asked.

"I've changed my mind," said he.

"Well, I'll tell you what we'll do," said she. "I'll follow you to the ends of the earth, but I shanna be able to get another chap; but if they think that I've changed my mind, I'll follow 'em." So well have the banns published, and when the wedding day comes the parson will say to the young man, "Wilt thou have this thy wedded wife?" and the man say "I will." And when he says to me, "Wilt thou have this thy wedded wife?" I shall say 'I willna.' And when the minister says to me, "Wilt thou have this woman to be thy wedded wife?" the man answered: "I will."

"Well, the parson said to the woman:—"Wilt thou have this man to be thy wedded husband?" And she said: "I willna."

"Why," said the young man, furiously, "didst thou would say, 'I willna.'?"

"I know," said the young woman.

**Higher Criticism.**

An owl in a belfry sat one night,  
As owls are supposed to do,  
And he warbled his lay with serene delight.  
"To-who!" said the owl; "to-who!"

But a wise man happened near by to stray,  
And his visage was dark with gloom.  
And he murmured, "Oh, why do you hoot  
that way?

You ought to have said 'to whom!'"

\* \* \*

**No Need of Welkians.**

The old man was sitting in front of his house on a stump which had been cut with a step, so as to make it do duty as a carriage block.

"Through work for the day?" asked the young man with a golf cap.

The old man nodded.

"It has been a great year for agriculturalists."

He inclined his head once more.

"And, of course, you are duly jubilant. You will be in a position to pay off any mortgages which may have been worrying you, and to equip yourself with improved farm machinery. You can buy a piano for the girls and a new carriage for yourself. There's nothing about it. You people are right in the swim. It's your turn to make the welkin ring."

The old man looked at him questioningly, and then responded:

"I guess not. The peddlars that come along this road has offered a terrible lot o'

constitutions. The best thing to do is look the future square in the face an' be prepared fur what's comin'. You know Admiral Dewey said straddle the ground, square out from the shoulder, then he ain't goin' to run fur President. When the admiral says anything' he means it, whether it goes in English or has to be translated into German. Do you foller me Mandy?"

"Yes-a-limpt! along, Joslar. But I mustn't say I got over being disappointed about not runnin' fur President some time ago."

"Of course. But in case you ever have occasion to meet the admiral I don't want you to be disappointed in him. Women folks has kind o' got in the way of expectin' men folks to be allus bowin' an' scrapin' their heads, an' makin' a grand, sweet surprise party. When the admiral has shook off the weight of official care there's no tellin' where he may go search of summer board. He'll jes' as be liable to light in our neighborhood as no Mandy, an' you mustn't lay it out agin him if he seems kind o' cold an' forbiddin'."

"I suppose," she answered, "that the kind o' girls in the way o' speakin' shan't quick, tellin' men to man the yard arm an' run up the sparker boom, an' see things that they want to see."

"And he wants it in a hurry."

"Tain't that. But gossip gits started to run back an' forth, an' they say the shakin' hands permit. An' kindest wishes, an' complimentin' ladies on their lovely crochet work, they'd be sure to say I'd got back to the resolution not to run for office an' was out o' the way. I thought I'd warn you in time, Mandy, to make it all clear. Us men folks has to keep a heap o' explanations in the world to keep from gettin' misunderstood."

new-fangled notions, but they never mentioned welkins. When we saw any ringin' shoes, we ain't botherin' about no welkins, now. We're makin' the dinner bell ringin' every day, an' it's a heap o' satisfaction to sit here an' reflect that satisfaction to it means business."

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**A Hot Day Episode.**

"Have you anything horrible in stock?" asked the young man with the limp collar and the suffused brow as he walked into the lair of the bookseller.

"By any particular author?"

"I couldn't specify. To tell you the truth, I ain't literary. But a friend of mine was describing something he read and I have been thinking that maybe books have more sense in 'em than I gave 'em credit for. I forgot the name of it, but anything in that line'll do."

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**CHINESE SHOES.**

**How They Are Made and What the Cost—All the Way From Canton.**

A truck load of boxes containing thousands of pairs of thick-soled, white-edged shoes, such as are worn by Chinamen, were recently stacked in the store room of a wholesale dealer in oriental goods in New York.

"Are those shoes made in this country?" inquired the writer as he looked at a pair of the stock displayed to view in an open box.

"No," replied the merchant, "they are made in Canton, where they are made by hand. Between 150,000 and 200,000 pairs of such shoes are annually imported by some 400 dealers in shoe stores, mostly in New York. From this, of course, the shoe-

There are some good stories over on that shelf.

"May I read a little in 'em, just to sample the goods?"

"Certainly."

In less than a quarter of an hour he came back to the bookseller.

"I've found one I like, find out that way," he said. "I haven't seen anything yet that fills the bill."

"I'm afraid we haven't what you want in stock."

"I'll get my friend to give me the title and then come back. He said it would be something that would freeze the blood in your veins."

"End. If I could find something to do that I'd be the most liberal customer you ever had."

"I'll be glad to have the book go through my veins like hot water through the pipes of a Turkish bath, and if I could read something that would make my hair curl, I'll be glad to do that."

"Through it I'd give you the biggest bill in my salary envelope and never say a word except 'keep the change.'"

He contributed to hundreds of retailers of oriental goods throughout the south, east and west, where they are sold to all classes of Chinese, at from \$1 to \$15 per pair, according to the quality and finish.

"The methods employed in the manufacture of Chinese shoes are ingenious and the design of the sole is very different from that of from ten to fifteen layers of very thin leather placed one upon another, making a built-up sole. The sole is stitched through and through in many places by regular lines, giving the bottom of the shoe a sort of quilted effect. This work is neatly done and the stitching is very close together, and when the sewing is completed a whitish material resembling plaster is applied to the edges of the sole. When the white edge of the shoe is rubbed with a damp cloth, it comes soiled it can be cleaned and whitened again by rubbing it with a damp cloth.

"The material used in the lining is usually of cloth, silk or satin, and the lining is always of the same material. The sole, however, often used on the top, cut in the back of the shoe, is made of a material the shoe, which may be of silk or satin or

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**An Invincible Debater.**

There's no one else all the world  
Kin talk like Uncle Jim.  
He's like a cyclone freshly curled  
An' full o' patriot vim.  
The folks flock in from every side,  
From village an' from farm,  
To hear the way he "pints with pride"  
Or "views things with alarm."

He'll make you throw your bosom out  
An' walk like any king;  
Or else he'll fill your soul with doubt  
An' bid your hopes take wing.  
He'll let you know the diggers slide;  
It's oratory's charm.

That thrills you when he "pints with pride"  
Or "views things with alarm."

\* \* \*

**In Heroic Attitude.**

When Sir John Steell, the noted English  
sculptor, had the Duke of Wellington sitting  
for a statue he wanted to get him to  
look warlike. All his efforts were in vain,  
however, for Wellington seemed, judging  
by his face, never to have heard of Waterloo  
or Talavera. At last Sir John lost patience  
and somewhat angrily followed:  
"As I am going to make this statue of  
your grace, can you not tell me what you  
were doing before, say, the battle of Salamis?"  
Whereupon the Duke, looking about the  
fields cheering on your men to deeds of

He's recognized through all the town  
A terror in debate.  
The man who tries to pin him down  
Is flying ag'in fate.  
His throat he simply opens wide,  
And answers his good night, arm  
valior by word and action?"

"Bah!" said the duke in evident scorn  
"If you really want to model me as I was  
on the morning of Salamanca, then do me  
crawling along a ditch on my stomach, with  
a telescope in my hand."

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**Good Reason for a Change**

AN swings his good right arm  
In sweepin' curves an "pints with pride"  
Or "views things with alarm."  
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\*  
**Forewarned.**  
"Mandy," said Farmer Cornstossel, "they's

"'Thin' I wanter prepare yer mind fur."  
"They ain't nothin' desprit goin' to happen, is they?" she asked, as she stopped her churning in the middle of a stroke.  
"Nothin' to shed tears or have hysterics over. But sometimes the small disapp'ntments of life sort o' eats into the heart an' makes people low spirited an' saps their

THE FOUR AGES OF A BATHER.

A black and white cartoon illustration depicting a scene of animal rescue or care. In the center, a man wearing a wide-brimmed hat and a patterned jacket is kneeling in a shallow body of water, holding a small animal. To his left, a woman in a hat and dress is crouching, also holding a small animal. In the foreground, a man and a woman are looking on. The scene is set outdoors with a fence in the background.